

for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Andrea Pierce is a 8th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Andrea Pierce is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Andrea Pierce for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING LOCAL SCHOOL'S ROBOTICS TEAMS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize three local schools that have excelled in robotic competitions. These three teams participated in the Robotics for Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST), regional tournament in Richmond on April 8–9, where 64 teams competed.

The local schools represented—Highland High School in Warrenton, RoboHawk-Team 3373; Fresta Valley Christian School in Marshall, Team 1731; and Battlefield High School in Haymarket, Team 1885 ILITE squad—are all local schools and teams that participated in the regional tournament.

The FIRST robotics program offers students a chance to design a robot from scratch. Their mission is to “inspire young people to be science and technology leaders, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership.” The students receive a box of parts with no instructions, just a specific goal that their robot must reach. Then, the students have to design the robot to complete certain tasks for the competitions. The students are allotted a six-week period to build their robots and must bag and tag them before the tournament.

The students are responsible for obtaining mentors and sponsors to raise the \$5,000 that is needed to receive a starter kit from FIRST. Their mentors are usually parents who work in the field of engineering and are role models and an inspiration to the students.

At the regional tournament in Richmond, there were three different competition rounds. The first round was autonomous, where the pre-programmed six-wheel robot had to act independently of its operators and place rings on pegs in order to gain points. The second round consisted of the operators having the robot place tubes on the scoring racks. The final and most difficult round, according to the Battlefield team, was having a minibot climb up the rack and place tubes at a faster and higher rate than the original robot.

I congratulate all the teams for participating in such a hands-on engineering and scientific

educational experience, with special mention to the Fresta Valley Christian School for making it to the quarterfinals of the competition. I also congratulate Battlefield High School for placing second in the regional tournament. I congratulate and commend the two teams for their participation in the National Championship, which was held in St. Louis April 27–30.

AARON CISNEROS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Aaron Cisneros for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Aaron Cisneros is a 10th grader at Jefferson Senior High and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Aaron Cisneros is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Aaron Cisneros for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all his future accomplishments.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today our national debt is \$14,325,784,545,788.31.

On January 6, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$3,687,358,799,494.50 since then.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

ALMA FRANCO-TORRES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Alma Franco-Torres for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Alma Franco-Torres is a 8th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Alma Franco-Torres is exemplary of the type of achieve-

ment that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Alma Franco-Torres for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

63RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF ISRAEL

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, today, Israel celebrates 63 years of independence as a Jewish-state. I am proud to say that it was on this same day 63 years ago that the United States became the first country in the world to recognize the State of Israel. For decades, our two nations have shared an unyielding bond based on trust, common values and a great respect for one another. I look forward to celebrating this bond for years to come.

As the Middle East and North Africa continue on their paths to self-governance it is my sincere hope that this progress will continue in the most peaceful way possible. I believe that once the people of these growing nations are able to achieve their ambitions that the bonds between Israel, the United States and the region will prosper. The United States will continue our efforts with Israel and others in the region to achieve widespread peace and work together toward this end.

I offer my best wishes to President Peres, Prime Minister Netanyahu, and the people of Israel as they celebrate their 63rd Independence Day. I remain committed to ensuring that the next 63 years of U.S.-Israel relations are marked by cooperation and mutual respect.

ASHLEIGH SANTISTEVAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Ashleigh Santistevan for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Ashleigh Santistevan is a 12th grader at Warren Tech North and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Ashleigh Santistevan is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Ashleigh Santistevan for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.